

# **ELECTRON-EMISSION TYPE FIELD-EMISSION DISPLAY AND METHOD OF FABRICATING THE SAME**

## **BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

The present invention relates in general to an electron-emission type field-  
5 emission display and a method of fabricating the same, and more particular, to a  
cathode electrode having a configuration that the beeline distance between every  
surface point of the cathode electrode layer and a gate conductive layer over the  
cathode electrode is identical.

The invention of carbon nanotube (CNT) has stimulated a novel competition  
10 in the development of minimizing nanotechnology globally. Currently, application  
of the carbon nanotube in optoelectronic display includes carbon-nanotube field-  
emission display (CNT FED), which is the most potential flat display panel as  
recognized in the industry. The conventional field-emission display is constructed  
by a front panel and a substrate, which generates a spike discharge at the cathode  
15 spike to emit an electron beam. The electron beam then impinges the phosphor  
layer coated on the screen to generate image. Such type of display has the  
characteristics of larger display area, shorter response time, and wider viewing  
angle. Thereby, it can be broadly applied to electronic products that require flat  
panel display to replace the conventional cathode ray tube (CRT) screen.

20 The front panel and the substrate are housed in a vacuum package. A spacer  
is disposed between the front panel and the substrate to prevent the glass plate from  
being broken by atmosphere pressure. In the past, the high fabrication cost becomes  
a bottle neck of the development of the field-emission display. However, the  
development of carbon nanotube resolves the high-cost issue while the image  
25 quality of cathode ray tube is maintained. The carbon nanotube field-emission  
display also includes the power saving and small-volume features.

However, the current carbon-nanotube field-emission display is still problematic in application. Figure 1 illustrates conventional field-emission display that includes an anode electrode layer 1a and a cathode electrode layer 2a. The anode electrode layer 1a includes a substrate 11a, a first conductive layer 12a on the substrate 11a, and a second conductive layer 13a covering the first conductive layer 12a. The first and second conductive layers 12a and 13a construct an anode 14a to be impinged by an electron beam from a cathode 26a. The cathode electrode layer 2a includes a substrate 21a, a first conductive layer (silver paste) 24a (silver paste) formed on the substrate 21a and a second conductive layer (carbon nanotube) 25a formed on the first conductive layer 24a. The first and second conductive layers 24a and 25a construct the cathode 26a. A dielectric layer 22a is formed on the substrate 2a around the cathode 26a, and the field-emission display further comprises a gate conductive layer 3a formed on the dielectric layer 22a. The gate conductive layer 3a has a through hole 31a aligned over the cathode 26a. As shown, the beeline distance between the periphery area of the second conductive layer 25a and the gate conductive layer 3a is shorter than that between the central area of the second conductive layer 25a and the gate conductive layer 3a. Therefore, the electric field at the periphery area of the second conductive layer 25a is higher than that of the central area of the second conductive layer 25a. As a result, the electrons drained at the periphery have a density larger than that of the electrons drained at the central area. The distribution of electrons results in a donut-shape electron beam. The non uniform distribution of electrons also results in leakage of electron beams through the gate conductive layer 3a.

## BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides a cathode so structured that the beeline distance between any point the cathode and a gate conductive layer is identical.

Therefore, a uniform electric field is resulted at all points of the cathode. Therefore, the electron emission from the cathode is uniform, and an electron beam with a uniform distribution is generated. As a result, the image quality is enhanced.

5 The cathode structure provide by the present invention has a higher center and a lower periphery. That is, the center of the cathode gradually descends towards the periphery thereof, such that the beeline distance between each point of the cathode structure and the gate conductive layer is identical to generate a uniformly distributed electron beam.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

10 These as well as other features of the present invention will become more apparent upon reference to the drawings therein:

Figure 1 illustrates a pixel structure of a conventional carbon-nanotube field-emission display;

15 Figure 2 shows a pixel structure of a carbon-nanotube field-emission display in one embodiment of the present invention;

Figures 3 to 5 shows the process flow of a cathode electrode layer of the carbon-nanotube field-emission display; and

Figure 6 shows the electron emission status of the pixel structure as shown in Figure 2.

### 20 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Referring to Figure 2, a pixel structure of a carbon nanotube field-emission display is illustrated. The carbon nanotube field-emission display includes an anode electrode layer 1, a cathode electrode layer 2, and a gate conductive layer 3 disposed between the anode and cathode electrode layers 1 and 2. The anode  
25 electrode layer 1 includes a plurality of anode electrodes 14 formed on a common

substrate 11. Each of the anode electrodes 14 includes a first conductive layer 12 formed on the substrate 11 and a second conductive layer 13 wrapping the first conductive layer 12 therein. Preferably, the substrate 11 is fabricated from glass material, and the second conductive layer is fabricated from phosphor material.

5       The cathode electrode layer 2 includes a plurality of cathode electrodes 26 formed on a common substrate 21. Around at least one of the cathodes 26, a dielectric layer 22 is formed and patterned on the substrate 21. As shown, the dielectric layer 22 is patterned by photolithography and etching process to form a recessed region 23 in which the cathode 26 is encompassed thereby. The gate  
10       conductive layer 3 is then formed on the dielectric layer 22. As shown, aligned with each cathode 26 and the corresponding anode 14 is an aperture 31 (gate hole) extending through the gate conductive layer 3. Each cathode 26 includes a first conductive layer 24 in the shape of a semi-spherical lump as shown in Figure 2. The protruding center of the first conductive layer 24 gradually descends towards  
15       the periphery thereof. On top of the central region of the first conductive layer 24, a second conductive layer 25 is formed by spray or photolithography. Thereby, the cathode 26 having all surface points equidistant to the gate conductive layer 3 is formed.

      Figures 3 to 5 illustrate the fabrication process of the field-emission display as shown in Figure 2. One of pixels is exemplarily shown in Figures 3 to 5. During  
20       the fabrication of the cathode electrode layer 26, a silver paste 4 with a thickness of about 20 microns is formed on the substrate 21 by screen printing. It is appreciated that the thickness may vary according to specific requirement. A gray-scale mask 5 is used to perform photolithography on the silver paste 4 using the gray-scale mask  
25       5 as a photomask. The gray-scale mask 5 placed over the substrate 4 is radiated by a yellow light 6. In this embodiment, the gray-scale mask 5 allows about 20% of the yellow light radiation to pass through from a center 52 thereof and about 100%

of the radiation to pass through from a periphery 51 thereof. Preferably, the transmission rate of the gray-scale mask 5 gradually increases from 20% at the center 52 to 100% at the periphery thereof. Therefore, after the yellow light radiation through the gray-scale mask 5, subsequent process is performed to result  
5 in a patterned silver paste 4 as shown in Figure 4. As shown in Figure 4, the patterned silver paste 4 gradually descends from the center to the periphery thereof. The patterned silver paste 4 serves as the first conductive layer 24.

As shown in Figure 5, carbon nanotube powders 7 are sprayed on the surface of the first conductive layer 24. A vacuum sintering process is then performed  
10 allowing the carbon nanotube powders 7 adhered to the first conductive layer 24 to serve as the second conductive layer 25.

Referring to Figure 6, in operation, an electron beam 8 generated by the cathode electrode 26 propagates through the aperture 31 of the gate conductive layer 3 to impinge upon the second conductive layer 13 of the anode 14. As the  
15 center of the cathode electrode 26 protrudes over the periphery thereof, the beeline distance between every surface point and the gate conductive layer 3 is identical. As a result, the electric field drained by the cathode electrode 26 for generating the electron beam is the same all over the cathode electrode 26. Therefore, the current density of the electron beam 8 is uniform, and the donut impurity of image  
20 displayed by each pixel is eliminated.

While an illustrative and presently preferred embodiment of the invention has been described in detail herein, it is to be understood that the inventive concepts may be otherwise variously embodied and employed and that the appended claims are intended to be construed to include such variations except insofar as limited by  
25 the prior art.